

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 EB-11 FEA-02 SCI-06 AGR-20 CU-05 AID-20

SAJ-01 ACDA-19 SAM-01 NIC-01 IO-14 EA-11 OMB-01 DRC-01

/228 W

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R 231305Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8670

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, BU, SY, XF

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SYRIAN PRESIDENT TO BULGARIA

1. SUMMARY. WARMLY RECEIVED OFFICIAL VISIT OF SYRIAN PRESIDENT AND BAATH PARTY LEADER HAFIZ AL ASAD TO BULGARIA SEPTEMBER 12-15 CONTINUED BULGARIAN WOOING OF ARAB OIL COUNTRIES. DURING VISIT AGREEMENTS GRANTING BULGARIAN ASSISTANCE TO SYRIA WERE SIGNED AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE LARGELY DEDICATED TO SYRIAN INTERESTS WAS ISSUED. UNDOUBTEDLY OIL WAS ALSO A TOPIC OF DISCUSSION DESPITE BULGARIAN POLICY OF EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IT CAN RELY ON SOVIET UNION FOR ENERGY SUPPLIES. END SUMMARY.

2. AGREEMENTS SIGNED WERE: 1) PROTOCOL FOR THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS ACCORDING TO WHICH BULGARIA WOULD GRANT CREDIT FOR INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS AS WELL AS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN THESE FIELDS; 2) CULTURAL AGREEMENT FOR 1974-1975.

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3. JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY ASAD AND TODOR ZHIVKOV SAID THERE WAS EXCHANGE OF OPINIONS ON INTERNATIONAL SITUATION WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION PAID TO RECENT EVENTS IN NEAR EAST AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. TWO COUNTRIES NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THAT POSITIONS ON BASIC INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS "COINCIDE OR ARE CLOSE", AND PRAISED PROCESS OF LESSENING OF TENSIONS AS IN INTERESTS OF ALL STATES. HOPE WAS EXPRESSED FOR CONCLUSION OF CSCE AND NECESSITY FOR FINAL STAGE "AT HIGHEST LEVEL" WAS STRESSED.

4. ON NEAR EAST, ASAD DESCRIBED EVENTS SINCE "LIBERATING" OCTOBER WAR AND GOLAN HEIGHTS WAR. AGREEMENT FOR SEPARATION OF ISRAELI AND ARAB FORCES WAS CALLED "FIRST STEP ON PATH TO COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL" OF ISRAELI FORCES FROM OCCUPIED LANDS. BULGARIA PUT ITSELF ON RECORD AS SUPPORTING RIGHT OF SYRIA TO USE "ALL METHODS AT ITS DISPOSAL" TO COMBAT ISRAELI AGRESSION AND TO FREE OCCUPIED AREAS. BOTH COUNTRIES RECOGNIZED THE PLO AS SOLE LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIANS--BULGARIA AGREED TO OPENING OF PLO OFFICE IN SOFIA DURING AUGUST 20-23 VISIT BY PLO DELEGATION--AND CALLED FOR INCLUSION OF PALESTINE QUESTION ON AGENDA OF 29TH UNGA. THEY ALSO CALLED FOR SPEEDY RECONVENING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE WITH PARTICIPATION OF "ALL INTERESTED" COUNTRIES. CYPRUS SITUATION RECEIVED PREDICTABLE ATTENTION AS DID SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM.

5. SIXTH EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF UNGA ON RAW MATERIALS AND DEVELOPMENT WAS ALSO STRESSED, WITH TWO COUNTRIES EMPHASIZING NECESSITY OF "BALANCED AND EQUAL" ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND RIGHT OF EACH COUNTRY TO DISPOSE OF ITS NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE INTERESTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ITS OWN PEOPLE.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH NO PUBLIC MENTION WAS MADE DURING VISIT OF DISCUSSION BULGARIA'S ENERGY NEEDS, SUBJECT MUST HAVE BEEN IN FOREFRONT OF BULGARIAN MINDS. BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY BULGARIAN OFFICIALS EXPRESS GOOD FORTUNE THAT SOVIET UNION SUPPLIES 95 PER CENT OF BULGARIAN OIL NEEDS AT OLD PRICE AND CONVICTION SOVIETS WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR SOME UNSPECIFIED TIME. LATTER HAS SOMEWHAT OF WHISTLING IN DARK QUALITY ABOUT IT. BULGARIANS ARE OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED, AND WOOING OF ARAB OIL COUNTRIES IS ONE PRECAUTION BEING TAKEN. ASAD'S VISIT REPAID OFFICIAL VISIT BY ZHIVKOV TO SYRIA IN 1972. BULGARIAN FONMIN MLADENOV VISTED SYRIA IN JULY OF THIS YEAR AND CURRENT JOINT COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCED THAT ZHIVKOV HAS ACCEPTED ANOTHER INVITATION TO VISIT SYRIA AT SOME UNSPECIFIED DATE IN THE FUTURE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SOFIA01735
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740267-0616
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740922/aaaaasiz.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 APR 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <02 JUL 2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF SYRIAN PRESIDENT TO BULGARIA
TAGS: PFOR, BU, SY, XF, (ASAD, HAFIZ AL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005